

# The SWORD of the LORD

Edited by JOHN R. RICE.

"And they cried, The Sword of the Lord, and of Gideon." Judges 7:20

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## EXCEPT YE REPENT!

By OSWALD J. SMITH

Visions of the night troubled me. I could not sleep. It seemed as though the voice of God was speaking. The Spirit interpreted the message, and I wrote. I know now that I was sent with heavy tidings, for God has a controversy with man.

He spoke. Heavy was the message. The Spirit interpreted.

The Scarlet Letter—at one time worn with shame—is now accepted with indifference. Seldom, in the old days, especially among the Jews, or, for that matter, in countries like Scotland, were there those who would indulge. Standards of morality were high and virtue priceless. The influence of the Bible vanquished evil passions and kept us pure.

But what of to-day? Our hotels have become brothels. Rooms are provided in our beer parlours for indulgence. Freedom between the sexes is no longer tabooed. Even among our Students there is sin. Illegitimate children abound. Abortions are frequent. Our girls have become murderers, the blood of their unborn is upon their hands.

Woe! Woe! to us. Judgment is certain. Doom is sure. God's com-

mand, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," has been violated.

I sought to close my eyes, for the night grew darker, but I could not sleep. Again the Spirit spoke.

I saw them as they danced. It was past midnight. Every now and then they slipped away and, in some darkened corridor, encouraged one another to drink. Many were soldiers in uniform. Their companions were girls from our High Schools and Colleges. They claimed they had had enough, but they were pressed to take more. Soon they were staggering like imbeciles, allowing indecent and even revolting familiarities, their intellects stupefied by the liquor they had consumed.

Oh, it was enough it make the angels weep. In the old days it was the men. Now it is the women—painted, worldly, and lost, then modestly forever gone. No wonder God has a controversy with this generation. Sin abounds, and there is no repentance.

Woe! Woe! to us. The day of destruction is near at hand. Tribulation will be our lot.

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## One Sends 80 Subscription

Hundreds of Subscriptions Pouring in; Offer For New Subscriptions Or For Others Closes Dec. 15. Big New Book, "Twelve Tremendous Themes" Free With Each 1 yr. Subscription at \$1.00

From Huntington, W. Va. a reader of the SWORD sent in 80 subscriptions, each new reader to get the free book, "Twelve Tremendous Themes," by Evangelist John R. Rice. That was a thank offering to God for great blessings received recently. Hundreds are taking advantage of our special offer. Here it is; for each new subscription or each subscription for others to this weekly Christian paper, we give absolutely free the 177 page book of teaching on twelve great Bible doctrines. The book is the largest, most expensive gift we have ever offered. Pages are extra large, strong paper cover is printed in red with author's picture.

This offer is not good now for present subscribers to renew their

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## What Will Happen When Jesus Comes?

By EVANGELIST JOHN R. RICE

INTRODUCTION: The Second Coming of Christ a Literal Coming

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself."—John 14:2, 3.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord"—1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven"—Acts 1:10, 11.

The night before His crucifixion Jesus told the disciples, "If I go . . . I will come again" (John 14:3). Jesus did go. He ascended up to Heaven, to prepare a place for us in the Father's house of many mansions, as He promised. Now He must come again to receive us, His own, to Himself so that where He is there we may be also. As surely as Jesus went away, He must come again.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven," said the inspired apostle Paul (1 Thess. 4:16). And that coming of the Saviour will be "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God," and at the same time "the dead in Christ shall rise." The second coming of Christ does not mean death, does not mean the coming of the Holy Spirit. No, it is "the Lord him-

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## Rainy Sunday Night Crowd, Rice-Shufelt Union Revival Campaign, East Huntington, West Virginia



We had already arranged for the photographer, thinking we would have a capacity crowd; then the rain came. See the balcony not full, though it had been full even two or three week nights, and the preceding Sunday night. This night there were 14 professions of faith in Christ, as I remember 12 of them new converts who had never before trusted Christ as Saviour. A number of

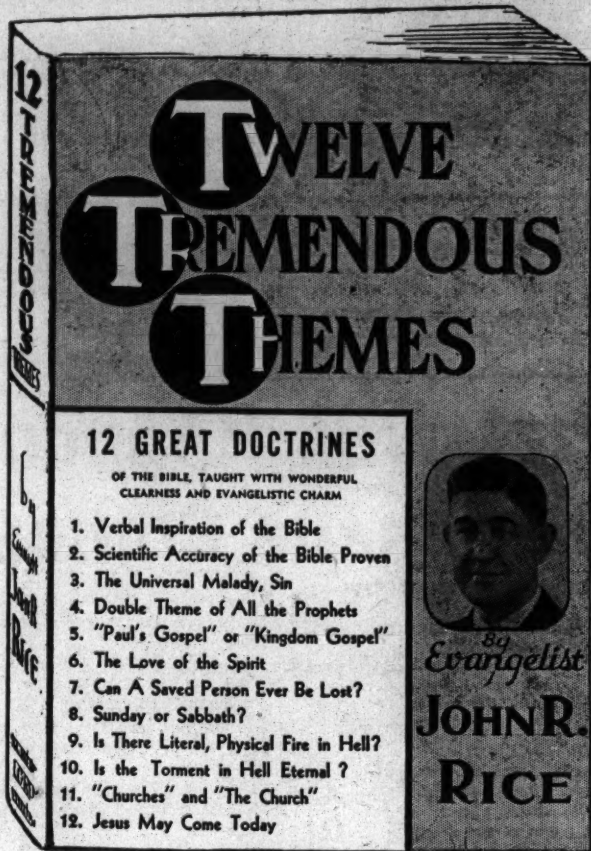
evenings there were more, 17, 18 and 20 conversions.

You can see only part of the fine choir of about 100 voices, sometimes more. Over 60 people were in the choir fifteen or more times, by careful records kept each night. On the platform you can see a number of ministers in

front of the choir. Usually there were twelve or fifteen, frequently more, cooperating pastors on the platform. We are sorry the picture is not clear enough to distinguish faces clearly but thought you would like to glimpse a crowd, about the average or a little more, of the campaign in East Huntington High School auditorium, Huntington, W. Va.



# THE NEW BOOK



Here is the new book, *Twelve Tremendous Themes* given free with each one year subscription for others at \$1.00 a year. Note the chapter titles in the picture. The long chapter on "The Verbal Inspiration of the Bible" fills a great need, showing how the Bible itself claims, and the greatest Bible believers agree, that in the original manuscripts, God gave the very words of the Bible, that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. You surely will be strengthened by this strong chapter.

The chapter on "The Scientific Accuracy of the Bible" shows that the Bible teaches the world is a ball hung out in space on nothing, that it rotates on its axis, that there are other worlds or planets; all this the Bible told thousands of years ago when scientists knew nothing of it. It tells how the Bible taught clearly that the life of the body is in the blood, (food digested by blood, oxygen taken in the body by blood in the lungs, poisons thrown off by the blood, tissues, bones, healed by the blood, etc.) though scientists until recent times thought letting out blood was a good treatment for disease, and did not even know it circulated! How the Bible gave the truth of Mendel's law, of variety within species, but no new species, ten times in the first chapter of the Bible! Rich for College and High School students who might be misled by ignorant and wicked unbelievers. See that they read this chapter; we believe it is unanswerable.

Then the two chapters on Hell prove, with many scriptures, that Hell is literal, with literal fire, and that the punishment of Hell is eternal. Can you prove that? The chapter on "Paul's Gospel" or "Kingdom Gospel" and the one called "The Double Theme of All the Prophets" will save many for the curse of ultradispensationalism and Bullingerism, and will make all the Bible a simple, understandable whole in doctrine. The chapter "Churches and the Church" answers many questions about local congregations and the bride of Christ, when the church began, etc.

## THE SWORD OF THE LORD

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EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

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## ECHOES OF HUNTINGTON REVIVAL

Rev. Orten H. Carder, pastor of the Fourth Avenue United Brethren Church wrote the following word for *The Sword of The Lord*.

**"EAST HUNTINGTON REVIVAL"**  
"In union there is strength; many were reached unitedly that could not be reached by individual churches."

"The fellowship enabled the pastors and the people of the twenty individual churches to become acquainted each with the others. Problems became mutual that had been considered by congregations as peculiar to their church only. Victories were shared also, selfishness was pushed into the background and securing membership became secondary to making disciples."

## Except Ye Repent!

(Continued from page one)

Is there any escape? Or will the fires of Gehenna engulf us?

I saw our magazines, sex publications, with their filthy pictures and suggestive stories, our indecent bathing beaches, and our parked cars devoted to licentiousness. I saw the graft and dishonesty, the political corruption of those in high office. I heard the swearing and cursing of the populace, and the filthy stories with which one entertained another. I watched the smoke from cigarettes held between painted lips, as women, once the highest of God's creation, stepped down from their exalted pedestal to poison their bodies and those of their unborn children with nicotine. I saw, too, the violence and cruelty of man to man, the persecution and torture of the oppressed, and the barbarity of our modern civilization. Who can describe it — the corruption of the human heart?

I saw it as in a vision, but I knew that it was true; and the Spirit interpreted it to me. Then heard I the voice of the Lord as I shuddered at the sight; and thus He spoke:

"Except ye repent, ye shall perish." (Luke 13:3).

But will men repent? Or will they be damned? Can we be saved, or is it already too late? For the nation — I know not. But for the individual — yes. If he will repent, God will withhold His judgment. It is either mercy or condemnation.

If you will confess that you are a sinner, and if you will repent and turn to God, He will forgive you. But you must renounce your sin, forsake it utterly, and accept Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour. I know you have transgressed, and that you are guilty. But He bids me tell you that "though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. 1:18). "Go," He says, "and sin no more."

Jesus bore your sins in His own body on the tree. Your debt has been paid, for He atoned with His own precious blood. "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6). Hence, you can now be forgiven, and your sins, great though they are, blotted out. "He will have mercy and abundantly pardon."

Will you then, right here and now, admit that you are a sinner, worthy of death, and receive Jesus Christ as your Sin-Bearer, your Substitute, your Saviour?

To-day is the day of Grace. God offers mercy. Tomorrow will be the day of judgment, when wrath will fall upon every Christ-rejecting sinner. What, then, is to be your decision? If you go on in your sin, you will be lost. If you turn from your sin and accept Christ, you will be saved. It is for you to decide.

"The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4). "Except ye repent, ye shall . . . perish." (Luke 13:3). Oh, then, repent. Accept Christ, and accept Him now.

many as you like, get a book for each subscription.

Send subscriptions to *The Sword of The Lord Publishers*, 145 N. Hale St., Wheaton, Ill. This offer closes at midnight, Dec. 15, so have your letter postmarked before that time.

"The cords were lengthened as the stakes were strengthened and reached out all over the city and to many all over the Tri-State area, not only by the radio messages but by personal contacts."

"We are expecting much good yet to be reported from both churches and individuals for months to come, in a spiritual awakening beginning in the union campaign led by John R. Rice and J. Stratton Shufelt."

"Orten H. Carder,  
"Pastor, Fourth Avenue United Brethren Church."

## DR. JOSEPH W. HAKES WRITES

We also have two letters from Dr. Joseph W. Hakes, pastor of the Twentieth Street Baptist Church, which was among the twenty churches officially cooperating in the campaign. Dr. Hakes writes:

"Dear Brother Rice:  
"I rejoiced in my spirit when I learned of your coming with Brother Shufelt to Huntington for evangelistic meetings, and now that the meetings have come to a conclusion, I am still rejoicing."

"Your ministry has made a tremendous impact upon all the cooperating churches. Many Christians will never live again on the low levels of worldliness. Your fearless preaching of the word, so aptly illustrated from your long-time experience, has caused the seed to fall not on the surface, but deep in the soil. Much of the faithful sowing will bear fruitage in the days that are to come."

"It was self evident of the warm place you have in the hearts of the people of East Huntington as expressed in their uplifted hands when I asked them on Sunday night how many of them have come to love you. Then again when the service came to a close last night to see the tears in the choir and the congregation was an evidence of the feelings of the people toward you and the blessing you have brought."

"I shall never forget last Sunday afternoon's meeting when you spoke on the return of the Lord. As I watched the congregation I could see the Spirit of God bringing deep conviction and I was not surprised at the results."

"I trust God will continue to bless your ministry and that our paths will cross often as the Lord tarries."

"Cordially yours in the bonds of Christ,  
"Joseph W. Hakes."

Later Dr. Hakes writes of the transformation in one of the schools in the area.

"One of our members who is a public school teacher, said that for twenty years she started her work with one of the children in

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## 80 Subscriptions

(Continued from page one)

own subscriptions. But you may still send subscriptions for your friends till Dec. 15, and with each subscription you may have, either for yourself or for the friend, a copy of the big book, *Twelve Tremendous Themes*. Here is your easiest way to get good Christmas gifts for your friends. Here is a blessed way to help get out the gospel. Many thousands have first gotten the *SWORD OF THE LORD* as a gift and then subscribed for themselves. That is the reason for the rapid growth of the paper.

But you must get your subscriptions in the mail by Dec. 15; just so the letter is postmarked by midnight Dec. 15 we will be glad to send the free premium book with each subscription. If you want the gift subscription to begin with Christmas number, please rush your letter at once. If requested, we will send a gift card announcing your gift of a subscription.

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4. If you want a card sent announcing that you are giving the subscription as a Christmas gift, be sure to say so plainly.
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6. Pray about it; have you done your part in getting this revival-producing paper into the homes of others? Somebody probably sent you your first copies. There is no way we can combat the bad literature, the teachings of false cults, the soul-destroying blight of modernism and equally deadly worldliness, except as revival fires are spread. Get people to praying, reading the Bible, trying to win souls, by getting them to read weekly these sermons of America's foremost soul winners, reading accounts of souls saved, in the *SWORD OF THE LORD*. Pray, I say, and then send all the subscriptions you can.

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1. First we mention "Petting and the Scarlet Sin." It is printed in maroon colored ink on canary yellow paper and the pictured cover shows a young man and young woman with the Word of God before them. Some of this material was printed in THE SWORD OF THE LORD and was so popular that 2,000 extra copies were requested by readers! It is so plain on what is wrong with petting and necking, and how they lead to Adultery, that two people stopped their subscriptions after reading it, but many many young people wrote to tell tearfully and gratefully that now, for the first time they could understand the sin and danger of petting and telling how they were quitting it, and preachers wrote begging that it be put in tract form for wide distribution. One pastor of a large church asked that 1,000 copies be reserved for him if we printed it in booklet form.

Here are the subheads of the booklet:

*How Necking and Petting Allure and Tempt Millions to Adultery*

*The Bible on Caresses*  
*Married Love and the Petting of Husband and Wife*

*Sex Passion and Bodily Desires When Uncouraged Often Overwhelm Reason and Override the Will*

*Petting Prepares the Body for the Married Relation*

*Other Harmful Results of Petting Besides Adultery*

*Some Rules About Lovemaking to Avoid Sin*

*Suggestions for Engaged Couples to Avoid Sin.*

*Be Charitable; Do Not Judge Harshly*

We have had printed 20,000 copies of this booklet, but we think this supply will be exhausted in a few weeks, as we anticipate an enormous demand. We know of nothing else in print on the subject written from the Bible viewpoint, and thorough, chaste yet plain and easily understood. It is needed. It will save thousands from the scarlet sin, we believe, and lead young people to a consecrated Christian life, and pave the way for happy and godly marriages that will last.

Will you help get this out? We suggest a copy be given every Christian college teacher, every teacher of young people in Sunday School, each president of Christian Endeavor, Epworth League, Luther League, and B. Y. P. U. You can do great good with this booklet. Specially, we should see that each earnest pastor who believes in a separated Christian life and wants to help young people, gets a sample copy of this booklet. You will like the beautiful appearance, the full, scriptural and scientific treatment, the tender appeal to holy living. Best of all, it is so attractive in makeup and matter that young people will read it gladly, almost without an exception.

We suggest you get 15 copies for \$1.00 at once and distribute them among interested groups, and we feel sure they will spread rapidly. Special prices on 100 or more copies, much cheaper, sent on request.

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"HELL — What the Bible Says About It." 40 large pages, six chapters, many scriptures, answers all the principal objections from the Bible. Has led to many conversions, has decision blank. A compelling book of Bible preaching with apt illustrations, self-cover, a great bargain.

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## What Will Happen When Jesus Comes?

(Continued from page one)

self" who shall descend from Heaven! Jesus is really coming again.

With mingled sorrow, joy, and awe, the disciples stood that day on Mount Olivet when Jesus ascended to Heaven after giving His last command to His disciples, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And two angels called "men in white apparel" were suddenly found standing beside the disciples and they said, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." Jesus went away in His literal, physical human body. Thomas had put his fingers in the wounds made by nails in His hands, and had put his hand over the wound in the side of the Saviour (John 20:27). When Jesus rose from the dead, He said to His disciples, "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." And then He asked for food and "they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them" (Luke 24:39-43). This Saviour with a body which ate and drank and digested food, this Saviour with the apostles handled, ascended to Heaven. And some day "this same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

There is more in the Bible about the second coming of Christ than about His first coming! All the Scriptures about His first coming were fulfilled to the letter. Jesus was literally born of a literal virgin. He was born in a literal town, Bethlehem, as was foretold. He fulfilled literally the promise that He would ride into Jerusalem upon a colt the foal of an ass. The prophecies that He would have stripes by which we are healed, that He would be wounded for our transgressions, that He would be pierced, that He would be hanged on a tree, that His body should not see corruption in the grave but would arise from the dead — all these were fulfilled literally. So the prophecies about Christ's second coming must be fulfilled

just as literally as the promises about His first coming. Jesus is coming again.

What will happen when Jesus comes?

There are two phases foretold about the second coming of Christ. First, the Saviour will descend from Heaven to the air above the earth, and will call out all His saints to take us to the Father's house in Heaven. Sleeping bodies of Christians who have died will be raised; the bodies of all living Christians will be changed, glorified in a moment, and together we will meet the Lord in the air, and He will take us to the place prepared for us. Later He will return with us to the earth, to set up His throne at Jerusalem, fulfilling the Scriptures by reigning on the throne of His father David. But it is the first phase of Christ's coming of which we write here. What will happen then, when Jesus first comes into the air to receive His saints? Then there will be a glad surprise, a glorious resurrection, a grand reunion, a grievous separation, and a grave accounting. Now let us see what God's Word has to say about five great subjects connected with Christ's coming.

### I. A GLAD SURPRISE

No one knows the day nor the hour of the Saviour's coming. No one knows even approximately when He may come. Yet Jesus may come at any moment. For all those who look for the coming of the Saviour with hungry hearts, His coming will be a glad, glad surprise! This is the teaching of many, many Scriptures, all of them inspired of God, most of them from the mouth of the Saviour Himself.

In Matthew 24:36-39 the Saviour Himself gives this solemn warning of the unexpected suddenness of His return.

"36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

"37 But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

"38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

"39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

Even the angels in Heaven do not know when Christ will return! No man in the world, then, can tell when Jesus will come. You cannot tell by measuring the great pyramid, counting an inch for a year as some have foolishly supposed.

You cannot tell by taking a prophecy in Daniel and making a year mean a day, as many have tried to do. God Himself knows the difference between a day and a year. When He said *day*, He meant *day*. When He says *year*, He means *year*. But He never told when Christ would return.

If any one thinks he has a revelation from Heaven, an impression, a leading of the Holy Spirit that tells him when Christ will return, he is dead wrong. God does not reveal that to anybody. The time of the Saviour's coming is a tremendous surprise. It will be a glad surprise to those who look for Him, those who are saved and ready for His coming. It may be a sad surprise to others, but it will be a surprise.

In the same chapter, in Matthew 24:42-44 Jesus said again,

"42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

"43 But know this, that if the Goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up."

"44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

Again the Saviour makes it clear that we do not know what hour the Saviour will return, and that we ought to be always ready, "for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

In these two passages Jesus told us that His coming would be as sudden and as unexpected as the flood in the days of Noah. Noah kept telling the people that a flood was coming. He told them so for one hundred and twenty

years, but they did not believe him. Even when Noah and his family went into the ark and God shut the door, they did not believe the flood was coming. And it did not come yet for seven days (Gen. 7:10). Poor, sinful, unsuspecting people continued eating, drinking, marrying and giving in marriage until the very day that Noah entered into the ark, we are told (vs. 38 above).

And then the Saviour tells us (vs. 43 above) that Christ's coming will be as sudden and unexpected as a thief who breaks into a house at night when all are asleep.

In Matthew, chapter 25, Jesus gives the parable of the ten virgins going out to meet the bridegroom. We are told that "while the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept" (Matt. 25:5). They did not know just when he was coming, and at midnight when the bridegroom came, they were surprised and some were not ready for their lamps were gone out because they had no oil. And Jesus gives the moral of that story in verse 13 in these words, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh."

Again, in Mark 13:32-37 the Saviour gives strong warning that His coming will be unexpected, that no man can foretell the time, that all ought to earnestly watch. Jesus said:

"But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

"Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is."

"For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch."

"Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning:"

"Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping."

"And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch."

The angels in Heaven do not know when the Saviour will return!

Even the Son Himself, while He was here on earth and had purposely limited knowledge, did not know when He would return. Doubtless, now in Heaven the Saviour knows all that the Father knows, and has been glorified with the glory He had with the Father before the world began. But if the perfect Saviour while on earth did not know of the time of His return, any other man who claims to know is presumptuous and ignorant. He is mistaken. No one on earth knows when the Saviour will return.

Jesus is like a man who has taken a long journey after giving clear order to His servants. He does not tell them just when He is to return, but they are to be ready to receive Him whenever He comes. So we are commanded, "Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning." O! let us not be spiritually asleep! Let us watch for the coming of the Saviour!

An old Civil War veteran of the Confederate army tells how he got home to Mississippi after the long, sad years of war. He said,

"After the war was over, a group of us boys from Mississippi struck out for home. We had no horses, almost no clothes, no shoes, our feet were bleeding and frost bitten, tied up with gunny sacks."

"Through a wrecked Southland we trudged our way. Finally we were within a few miles of home in 'ole Mississippi,' foot sore, tired and weary."

The other gaunt soldiers wanted

(Continued on page four)

### SISTER ABIGAIL

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## What Will Happen When Jesus Comes?

(Continued from page three)

to lie down and sleep and go on the rest of the way in the morning. But Bill said, "I am on familiar ground; just a few more miles and we will be home for breakfast." The others said, "We are too tired; let's sleep."

But Bill said, "No, I am going home, going to eat breakfast at home in the morning!"

He left the group, dragged on through the night, and when the first break of day came, he stood on the last hill from home! He saw the smoke going up from the chimney where his mother was getting breakfast.

He forgot he was tired, forgot his bleeding feet. He quickened his pace, ran, came to the foot of the hill, to the lane leading up to the house. His young brother Jim, sitting on the rail fence, happened to look his way and saw him. Jim shouted to those in the house, "YONDER COMES BILLY! YONDER COMES BILLY!"

Out came father and mother and all the family! The slaves and all came running. Whites and blacks together struck out down the long lane. They grabbed him, hugged him, carried him up to the house, took off his rags. They bathed him and gave him clean clothes. And all together shouted and laughed and praised God for Billy's homecoming!

Well, Jesus' coming for His own will be as unexpected as that. When we hear the glad shout, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," it will be a glad surprise. Like a sweetheart who has so long looked for the homecoming of her soldier and finds him suddenly come and knocking on her door, so will the saints of God meet our Saviour, our Beloved, our Redeemer, our King!

The Saviour taught us all to pray, "Thy kingdom come." Surely that means that we should be looking for the King. And when the beloved John had written the book of Revelation, closing the canon of Scripture, Revelation 22:20, the very last verse in the Bible except the closing salutation says, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly." And the beloved John was allowed to add his own glad cry, "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" O, it is the cry of my heart today!

"It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,

When sunlight thro' darkness and shadow is breaking,  
That Jesus will come in the fullness of glory,  
To receive from the world 'His own.'

"It may be at midday, it may be at twilight,

It may be, perchance, that the blackness of midnight  
Will burst into light in the blaze of His glory,  
When Jesus receives 'His own.'

"While its hosts cry Hosanna, from heaven descending,  
With glorified saints and the angels attending,  
With grace on His brow, like a halo of glory,  
Will Jesus receive 'His own.'

"Oh, joy! oh, delight! should we go without dying,  
No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying,  
Caught up thro' the clouds with our Lord into glory,  
When Jesus receives 'His own.'

"O Lord Jesus, how long, how long Ere we shout the glad song,  
Christ returneth! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Amen. Hallelujah! Amen."

### II. A GLORIOUS RESURRECTION

There are many reasons for Christians to look forward to the

coming of the Saviour. And one of them is that death will be forever conquered for the Christian, and the graves will give up their sainted dead!

Very early death became a reality to me. When I was about five years old my baby brother, little Porter, died and left us. Although she had four others, my mother grieved and grieved, and in a few short months she too lay on her death bed. There, in a vision, she saw with glad eyes the Saviour and her baby. She had my cousin sing, "How Firm a Foundation." We wept while she rejoiced. Then we promised to meet her in Heaven, and she closed her tired eyes and crossed her thin hands upon her breast and smiled and fell asleep.

I remember the November day when we laid her body away. My father knelt beside the open grave. There was no white muslin to hide the raw dirt of the grave, like a wound in the earth. No fake, man-made carpet of grass was thrown over the clods. My father put one arm around his two little orphan girls, and one around his two little boys and watched as they lowered the precious body in its dark casket into the bosom of mother earth. The rain beat down upon us and a friendly neighbor woman held an umbrella over our heads. O, death! death! DEATH! All the years my lonely heart has known the reality of death.

Years later I was preaching in a revival campaign in Louisiana when a telegram brought me word that Papa had had a stroke, and that I must come at once if I hoped to see him alive. The long night on the train I listened to the rails clicking under my head and faced the fact that I would soon be without my father. He lived about two years, by God's blessing, and then he went home to be with the Lord.

As a pastor and radio minister, I have been called to preach many a funeral. I have thus stood by many a death-bed. I have said what words I could to comfort sorrowing loved ones. And the best thing I ever found in the Word of God to comfort bereaved hearts is this truth: when Jesus comes the graves will give up their dead!

In I Thessalonians 4:13-18 are these sweet and comforting words: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:

"Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

"Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

When Jesus comes into the air to receive His saints, what is the first thing that will happen? Why, beloved friend, then "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: AND THE DEAD IN CHRIST SHALL RISE FIRST."

The same blessed and comforting truth is taught in I Corinthians 15:51-57, as follows:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed,

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.

"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.

"But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

When the trumpet sounds at the Saviour's coming in the air to receive us, the resurrection of the sleeping "bodies of all the Christians of all ages will take place "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Corruption must put on incorruption! Mortal bodies must become immortal! The poor, decaying bodies that have crumbled back to dust will be reassembled by the mighty power of God. The spirits of these departed saints will return with Jesus and enter into these new, resurrected bodies. They will be glorious bodies. They will be bodies never to be sick, never to be weak, never to have pain, and never, never to die!

Do not fret when you remember that the bodies of some saints may have been dissolved in the waters of the seven seas or that other bodies have been burned and the gases have been wafted by breezes of the illimitable air and only a hand full of ashes remaining may have been sprinkled on a flowing stream. Never mind; the God who made all things and made man from the dust of the earth in his own image, knows how to make again the bodies of the Christian dead. And they will be new bodies, glorious bodies without taint, without sickness, without weakness and without the germs or frailty of mortality.

O, the glorious hosts that will rise from the cemeteries of the world! O, the armies of saints who will assemble from the battle fields and plague spots of the world! O, the joyful redeemed gathering from the bosom of the sea! The dead in Christ shall rise! Their spirits will return from Heaven to enter into glorified bodies and these bodies will be caught up to meet the Saviour in the air.

All of us, however young or wise or good, have the seeds of death in our bodies. We live in a dying world. It is said that Alexander the Great, world-wide conqueror at thirty, had a court fool to whisper again and again in his ear, "Alexander, thou art mortal!" But if the court jester of Alexander knew that all men are mortal, and that "the paths of glory lead but to the grave," then he was not a fool, but a wise man. For we are no sooner born than we begin to die. Even in the years of seeming health our bones are growing brittle, the exuberant strength begins to lessen, the hair begins to thin or turn gray, the eyes grow slowly dim; death slowly approaches.

With some melancholy I realize that I am not physically the man I once was. I could not now ride bucking broncs, nor play out the full four quarters of a college football game, nor lift nine hundred pounds, nor chin myself fifteen times on a bar. My eyes need glasses, I must watch my diet, I cannot play all night without paying a price. I am only forty-seven, but I have in my body the sentence of death.

But O, the physical slowing down of the years is little compared with the awful evidences of sin in me. People die because of sin. And every day I am conscious of the self-will of the wicked disinterest in God and in the Bible and prayer, of the concern about worldly things and the little interest in eternal things! Like Paul I have wept many the time, finding that "in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing," and that "when I would do good, evil is present with me," and "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin" (Rom. 7:18, 21, 25). Like Paul, I cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Well, bless God, when Jesus comes I shall be delivered from the body of this death. When Jesus comes, the resurrection fact and promise is not only for the Christian dead; it is for the Christians living!

First Corinthians 15:51, 52 says, "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed,

"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

When the Christian dead are raised, then the Christian living shall be changed. We will get the same kind of bodies they get! As

they will be done with sickness, done with weakness, done with sinning, and done with dying, so, blessed be God, shall ye! In one glad and glorious moment of time, when Jesus comes and the shout is heard and the trumpet is blown, yea, even "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye" all of us who have been converted, who have been saved, and who are yet alive when Jesus comes, will be changed and given resurrection, glorified bodies.

Romans 8:10, 11 explains this precious hope of the glorification of our bodies.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

Those of us who are saved have Christ within us, in the presence of his Holy Spirit. Our bodies are dead because of sin, even though we are born again, even though we are Christians. Even God's own saints on earth have the sentence of death upon our bodies, because we are still sinners. We are sinners forgiven, sinners saved; but the sentence of death is on our bodies because of our sin. But we also have the Holy Spirit in us. And this Holy Spirit who lives in the body of Christians is the One who will suddenly change us and miraculously make our bodies perfect, sinless, holy when Jesus comes, The same Holy Spirit that "raised up Jesus from the dead . . . shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."

O, how spiritually minded Christians long for that day when we will sin no more! And Romans 8:19-23 tells us of the glory that awaits our created bodies.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope.

"Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

You see that our created bodies were made subject to vanity. But thank God, "The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Christians now have saved souls. One day we will also have saved bodies! We have now "the firstfruits of the Spirits," but we wait for the redemption of our body. Now my soul is saved. I am still waiting for the redemption or salvation of my body. I will get that when Jesus comes.

Turning back again to that glorious passage in I Corinthians, chapter 15, we read in verses 54 to 57:

"54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. "55 O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

"56 The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. "57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

That, for the Christian, is the end of death! Then we can shout, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" We can rejoice over all the empty graves from whence our loved ones and the blessed dead will be risen. And we can rejoice over our own old nature and corruptible body which will have been also changed and glorified. And not until then can we cry, "O death, where is thy sting?" for verse 56 tells us, "The sting of death is sin," and none of us will be altogether done with sin until Jesus comes, Then what a shouting time of praises! Then what glad tears of eternal

rejoicing! Then what sweet sense of the perfect holiness for which earnest Christians have long sought! When sin is finished for the Christian, then death will be finished, too, at the return of Christ.

That glorious victory over death is headed up in Romans 16:20, "And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." That refers to the second coming of Christ. Did not God promise in Genesis 3:15 that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head? And that did not happen at the crucifixion. Then Satan bruised the heel of the Seed of the woman, Christ. But when Christ shall come the second time, then the God of peace will bruise Satan under our feet. O, thank God, the promise says that it shall be shortly! In I Corinthians 15:51 are two blessed lessons for us. Let us read that verse again.

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."

First, it is quite clear that some Christians will never die. The Bible does not teach Christians to look forward to death but rather to look forward to the coming of the Saviour which may come at any moment and deliver us forever from the prospect of death. Perhaps some now living may never die. If Jesus comes today, God's saints, those converted and saved, will be caught up to meet Christ in the air, changed in a moment without dying. The song puts that happy aspiration of a saint in these words,

"Oh, joy! oh, delight! should we go without dying,

No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying,  
Caught up thro' the clouds with our Lord into glory,

When Jesus receives 'His own.'

False cults have seized on this truth and have sometimes made it odious by connecting it with unscriptural teaching. But it is a blessed fact nevertheless, that many Christians will never die. Those of us who are alive when Jesus comes will be changed instantly and caught up to meet Christ in the air along with those raised from the graves. How Christians then ought to joyfully look for Jesus to come.

And the second truth taught in I Corinthians 15 is that there will be no split rapture, no division of the saved when Jesus comes. "We shall not all sleep"; no, we will not all die, "but we shall ALL be changed." Some people have thought that only Christians who are filled with the Spirit, or only those who are sinless and perfect, "wholly sanctified," as some people say, will be caught up to meet Christ at the rapture. But that is not the teaching of the Bible. The Bible teaching is that the glorification of our bodies was bought on the cross. It is a part of salvation. It is all of grace. We do not deserve the salvation of our souls. It is "not of works lest any man should boast." And we do not deserve "the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body," which Romans 8:23 says will take place when Jesus comes. We do not deserve it, but it is a part of salvation, a salvation wholly of grace, purchased by the blood of Jesus Christ for us who trust in Him. So, the Scripture says, "we shall ALL be changed." Every one of the converted, born again people whose bodies are in the graves will be changed, glorified, and given resurrection bodies in that moment when Jesus comes. And likewise every living person who has been converted, who has trusted in this Saviour for redemption and everlasting life, will be changed. Not a word is said about any of the Christian dead who will miss the resurrection. Not a word is said about any of the Christians living who will miss that glorious change.

When Christ comes to receive His bride, He will not take an arm and a leg, and a handful of hair, but He will take His entire bride, all of the born again saints. Someone has well said that it will be a rapture, not a rupture of God's children. O, the glorious resurrection when Jesus comes!

(Another article on the subject, "What Will Happen When Jesus Comes?" will appear next week, telling of, III. A Grand Reunion, IV. A Grievous Separation, and V. A Grave Accounting).

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